

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following amended paragraph:

One naive solution is to use a micropayment scheme, in which a “bank generates “coins” for its customers, which they can spend to pay for services provided by various merchants. The user pre-pays for these coins, and the system is debit-based. If an Internet service is being accessed, for example, the user can include one coin with every packet of data it sends over the foreign service provider's (FSP's) network. The FSP is provided with a mechanism for validating these coins. After validating a coin, the FSP may transmit the corresponding packet. Ultimately, the FSP provides all of these coins to the home service provider (HSP) so that the FSP can be reimbursed. The electronic payment system is secure in the sense that only the HSP can create valid electronic coins that no other party can forge.